



# ASPS CME Activity Conflict of Interest Policy

## Effective January 1, 2022

The American Society of Plastic Surgeons (ASPS) is accredited by the Accreditation Council for Continuing Medical Education (ACCME) to provide continuing medical education (CME) for physicians. ASPS designates educational activities for *AMA PRA Category 1 Credit™*. As such, ASPS has the obligation to ensure the delivery of education that is balanced, independent from commercial interests, free of commercial bias, objective, and scientifically rigorous.

Learners participating in all formats of CME activities sponsored, co-sponsored, or jointly sponsored, managed or affiliated by the ASPS must be provided the opportunity to properly evaluate the objectivity of the information, analysis, and recommendations presented during an activity. It is important that the learners be informed of any aspect of personal or professional circumstance, originating with anyone in a position to control educational content, out of which a perception of a conflict of interest may arise.

ASPS is responsible for identifying and managing relevant financial relationships between individuals in control of educational content and ineligible companies. **An ineligible company** is defined by the ACCME as those whose primary business is producing, marketing, selling, re-selling, or distributing health care products used by or on patients. There are some exceptions, such as, eligible non-profit or government organizations, non-health care related companies, and providers of clinical service directly to patients. **Circumstances calling for disclosure include**, but are not limited to: 1.) receipt of financial support from an ineligible company for research activities or other scientific work reported on during the program, or, 2.) a personal financial or proprietary interest in, or consultant relationship to, a company whose product or service is discussed as part of the subject matter of the activity. **Examples of financial relationships include** employee, researcher, consultant, advisor, speaker, independent contractor (including contracted research), royalties or patent beneficiary, executive role, and ownership interest. Individual stocks and stock options should be disclosed; diversified mutual funds do not need to be disclosed. Research funding from ineligible companies should be disclosed by the principal or named investigator even if that individual's institution receives the research grant and manages the funds. Specifically, any financial relationship in any amount occurring in the **last twenty-four (24) months** (even if the relationship has been divested), must be disclosed.

**A conflict of interest** exists wherein an individual has or uses the opportunity to inject bias based on the held financial interest into the educational content or dissemination of related information. **According to the ACCME, financial relationships create actual conflicts of interest in CME when individuals have both a financial relationship with an ineligible company and the opportunity to affect the content of CME about the products or services of that ineligible company.**

Based on the above, **ALL** CME-related persons involved with educational content, including committee members, activity chairs/co-chairs, planners, reviewers, presenters, faculty, moderators, authors, editors, staff, and others as applicable, must:

- A) Disclose any aspect of his/her personal or professional circumstances which might reasonably be related to the educational activity content or material being presented or disseminated; OR indicate that they have nothing to disclose.
- B) Confirm that any financial relationship/affiliation disclosed will in no way influence the content of material being presented or disseminated. For persons with oversight responsibility, recusal from the formulation process is required for any CME activity or activity segment which is directly related to the held financial relationship.
- C) Confirm that the above submitted disclosure statement must, and will, be stated verbally from the podium prior to presentation and included in print on any audio/visual or handout material. Additionally, ASPS will publish the submitted disclosure information, including mitigation statement, in related activity materials, in print and/or online, as applicable.
- D) **Planners/Reviewers:** Confirm that the activity content will not be formulated or approved in any way to include recommendations or promotional language regarding any products or services for which a financial relationship exists, and that any approved mention of a product or device within the activity content will be technique/procedure oriented only; will be based on peer-reviewed, best available evidence/independent unbiased scientific research, and will relate to content in a way that conforms to the standards of medical care published within generally accepted literature.  
**Presenters/Authors:** Confirm that the presentation/educational materials will contain absolutely NO recommendations or promotion regarding any products or services for which a financial relationship exists. ANY mention of a product or device within the verbal presentation, visuals or handout material **MUST** be technique/procedure oriented only; must be based on peer reviewed, best available evidence/independent unbiased scientific research, and will relate to content in a way that conforms to the standards of medical care published within generally accepted literature.
- E) Confirm that all educational materials submitted (slides, handouts, articles, etc.) will contain and will be reviewed for the proper disclosure statement(s) and references to the best available evidence.
- F) Confirm that no commercial support or honoraria will be accepted from outside sources for participation in CME activity content formulation, approval, individual presentation, publication, or attendance at a program.
- G) **Educational Planners/Reviewers:** Confirm that necessary steps will be taken to ensure that all CME activity participants abide by the guidelines outlined in the CME Activity Conflict of Interest Disclosure statement, including but not limited to presentation, handout and audio-visual content, verbal and written disclosures, identification, and resolution of conflict of interest, and honoraria policies, including but not limited to participant censure and/or removal from the current and/or future CME activities.
- H) **Presenters/Authors:** Confirm that the guidelines outlined in the CME Activity Conflict of Interest Disclosure statement will be followed, including but not limited to presentation, handout and audio-visual content, verbal and written disclosures, identification and resolution of conflict of interest, and honoraria policies.
- I) Acknowledge that if reasonable information is obtained by the accredited provider which results in doubt as to the validity of the confirmations above, that participation in the related activity formulation will be revoked; a replacement may be assigned and/or the material substituted, or other action taken, as appropriate.